



Chapter 7

Instructional Adaptations for Students with Diverse Needs

In the interest of compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)3, adaptations for students with disabilities are suggested in this section.

Adaptations for exceptionally able students are included in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)5.

In the interest of serving the needs of students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), adaptations for LEP students are also suggested in this section.

Instructional Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

Introduction

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and related curriculum frameworks are the focus of curriculum and instruction for all pupils. That population includes students with disabilities. To provide pupils with disabilities meaningful access to curriculum and instruction based on the content standards, adaptations may be required. The adaptations are not intended to compromise the content standards. Instead, adaptations provide students with disabilities the opportunity to maximize their strengths and compensate for their learning differences.



Figure 7.1

**RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE
STANDARDS AND
FRAMEWORKS, THE
GENERAL EDUCATION
CURRICULUM, AND
IEPS**

***Individualized
Education
Programs
(IEPs)***

***General
Education***

***Core Curriculum Content
Standards and Curriculum
Frameworks***

Because students with disabilities are expected to participate in the general education curriculum, their individual education programs reflect the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the local school district's general education curriculum (see Figure 7.1).

The Federal Requirements

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) amendments of 1997 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guarantee students with disabilities the right to general education *program adaptations as specified in their Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 plans*. The intent of the acts is to give these students access to the general education program and curriculum.

The term *adaptation*, in the context of the frameworks, is defined as any adjustment or modification to the general education program that enables students with disabilities to participate in, and benefit from, activities and experiences based on the Core Curriculum Content Standards and demonstrate understanding and application of the content standards. Such modifications may be those identified as *best practice*.

**Cross-Content Workplace
Readiness: Participation and
Benefits**

Students with disabilities demonstrate a broad range of learning, cognitive, communication, physical, sensory, and social/emotional differences that may necessitate adaptations to the general education program. Each pupil manifests his or her learning abilities, learning style,



and learning preferences in a unique way. Consequently, the types of adaptations needed and the programs in which the adaptations will be implemented are determined for each student within the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 planning processes.

Cross-content workplace readiness requires different forms of participation. Instructional and physical adaptations are required for learning experiences in the classroom and in the community. Some adaptations may structure a student's learning in an explicit and systematic way, including the way in which instruction is presented and organized. For example, greater emphasis might be placed on foundation skills. Physical adaptations might be required to assist the student with tasks requiring dexterity and flexibility or the use of a variety of tools and materials. Physical adaptations might also be necessary to address safety considerations. Therefore, the teacher must understand the nature of the student's disability and access the individual education program.

Success for all is the goal. The following sections describe the types of adaptations that may be required. Also presented are best-practice strategies that are generally applicable to the enhancement of the special education student's access to the classroom and to learning and success.

Classroom Organization

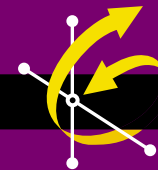
Students with disabilities may require specific adaptations that facilitate their participation in classroom activities. The classroom's organization and environment will maximize the students' participation and attention if the following needs are addressed:

- comfort
- interaction
- peer and adult communication
- independence
- mobility

Table 7.1

EXAMPLES OF ADAPTATIONS

Instructional Groups	Individual Support	Environmental Conditions	Adaptive Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative groups • Peer partners • Buddy system • Teams • Common interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist physically • Clarify • Prompt/cue • Gesture/signal • Interpret • Reinforce • Highlight • Organize • Focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ventilation • Temperature • Sound • Lighting • Conference area • Storage accessibility • Labeled bins and cabinets <p>Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear pathways • Posted rules • Labeling • Distribution (materials) • Directions • Demonstrations • Role assignments • Timekeeping • Health/chemical • Equipment storage and use • Preparation and cleanup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump bottles • Revolving utensil holder • Books on tape • Directions on tape • Tape recorder • Tools with foam handles • Voice-activated recorder • Personal computer • PC software: e.g., <i>Ultimate Reader</i> (reads texts aloud on Internet) • Typography books (bas-relief) • Speech synthesizer • Communication board • Lap/drawing board • Closed-captioned videos and monitors • Braille materials • Large print materials • Low-vision equipment • Talking watch or clock • Calculator • FM system



Instructional Presentation

Instructional presentation adaptations can enhance a student's attention and ability to focus on instruction. The adaptations provide special education students with teacher-initiated and teacher-directed interventions that prepare students for learning and engage students in the learning process (*instructional preparation*); structure and organize information (*instructional prompts*); and foster understanding of new concepts and processes during classroom activities (*instructional applications*).

Note that many of these "adaptations" are simply good instructional practices, from which all students would benefit.

Table 7.2

PREPARATION, PROMPTS, AND APPLICATIONS

Preparation	Prompts	Applications
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate to personal experience • Preview materials • Use organizing tools • Brainstorm/web • Use questioning techniques • Predict • Preteach vocabulary • Review strategy • Demonstrate • Illustrate • Use models • Provide a mini-lesson <p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase interest • Understand objectives/goals • Grasp key concepts • Recall • Use prior knowledge • Focus 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic organizers • Semantic organizers • Outlines • Mnemonics • Analogies • Imagery • Color coding • Highlight/underline • Segment techniques and task analysis • Key words/labels • Repeat/clarify directions • Use cue cards, chalkboard, pictures, overhead • Movement cues <p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize information • Understand whole/part relations • Associate and connect cues • Grasp essential concepts • Classify • Compare • Recall • Summarize 	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on activities • Constructions • Dramatization • Props/manipulatives • Illustrations • Flowcharts • Field trips • Guest speakers • Interviews/surveys • Life applications • Process modeling • Think aloud • Games/puzzles • Simulations <p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify abstractions • Give concrete examples • Elaborate • Connections • Association • Relate to experience • Form generalizations • Use multiple modalities

Instructional Monitoring

Frequent monitoring of the performance and progress of students with disabilities is essential to ensure that students are, in fact, understanding and benefiting from learning activities. Monitoring provides teachers with a means of obtaining information about students and their ability to participate effectively in activities. Monitoring helps teachers determine when and how to adjust instruction and provides supports to promote student development. Equally important is student self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-management, which promote student self-reflection and self-direction regarding task demands, goal attainment, and performance accuracy.

Table 7.3

INSTRUCTIONAL MONITORING

Examples		Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting • Anecdotal recording • Progress graphs • Checklists/rubrics • Timelines • Journal entries • Portfolios • Videos • Audiotapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference • Peer critiques • Student contracts • Systematic assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic check for understanding • Progress checks • Redirect attention • Direct on-task behavior • Promote participation • Student goal setting • Reinforcement • Manage student behavior • Self-critique

Student Response

Student performance responses provide students with disabilities a means of demonstrating progress toward the lesson objectives related to the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Curriculum Framework* activities.

Table 7.4

RESPONSE PROCEDURES AND FORMATS

Response Procedures	Response Formats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend time • Provide practice exercises • Interpret/interpreter • Use preferred response mode (written, dictated, or oral) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer oral/written options • Maintain eye contact • Demonstrate • Peer-teach • Discuss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make observations • Provide choices to students



Instructional Adaptations for Exceptionally Able Students

Gifted and Talented

Introduction

This section offers information on developing instructional adaptations for exceptionally able students. Required adaptations for exceptionally able students are supported by the section of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards titled, Implementation Issues: We must provide all students with appropriate challenges so that the raised expectations for all students do not result in lowered expectations for the exceptionally able.”

Additionally, New Jersey Administrative Code — N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)5 — requires that “district boards of education shall be responsible for indentifying gifted and talented students and shall provide them with appropriate instructional adaptations and services.”

Suggestions for serving the needs of these students are offered in the following categories: the identification process, adaptation strategies, and educational planning.



Adaptations for Exceptionally Able Students

Curricular adaptations, also referred to as differentiating the curriculum, refers to appropriate adjustments to curriculum content, teaching strategies, expectations of student mastery, and scope and sequence.

Adaptation strategies include the following:

- ▶ interdisciplinary and problem-based assignments with planned scope and sequence
- ▶ advanced, accelerated, or compacted content
- ▶ abstract and advanced higher-level thinking
- ▶ allowance for individual student interests
- ▶ assignments geared to development in the areas of affect, creativity, cognition, and research skills
- ▶ complex, in-depth assignments
- ▶ diverse enrichment that broadens learning
- ▶ variety in types of resources used
- ▶ community involvement
- ▶ cultural diversity
- ▶ internships, mentorships, and other forms of apprenticeship

Adaptation categories include the following: acceleration, enrichment, and grouping. The next several pages identify a variety of adaptive efforts within these categories.

Process for the Identification of Exceptionally Able Students

Exceptionally able (gifted) students are those who:

- demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, creative, and/or artistic ability(ies),
- possess exceptional leadership skills,
- excel in specific field (e.g., as athlete, entrepreneur),
- function above grade level,
- need accommodation or special instruction and/or services to achieve at levels commensurate with a challenge to their abilities.

The characteristics of exceptionally able students include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ability to grasp concepts rapidly and/or intuitively
- intense curiosity about principles and how things work
- ability to generate theories and hypotheses and to pursue methods of inquiry
- produce products that express insight, creativity, and/or excellence
- pose questions beyond those presented in the Core Curriculum Content Standards

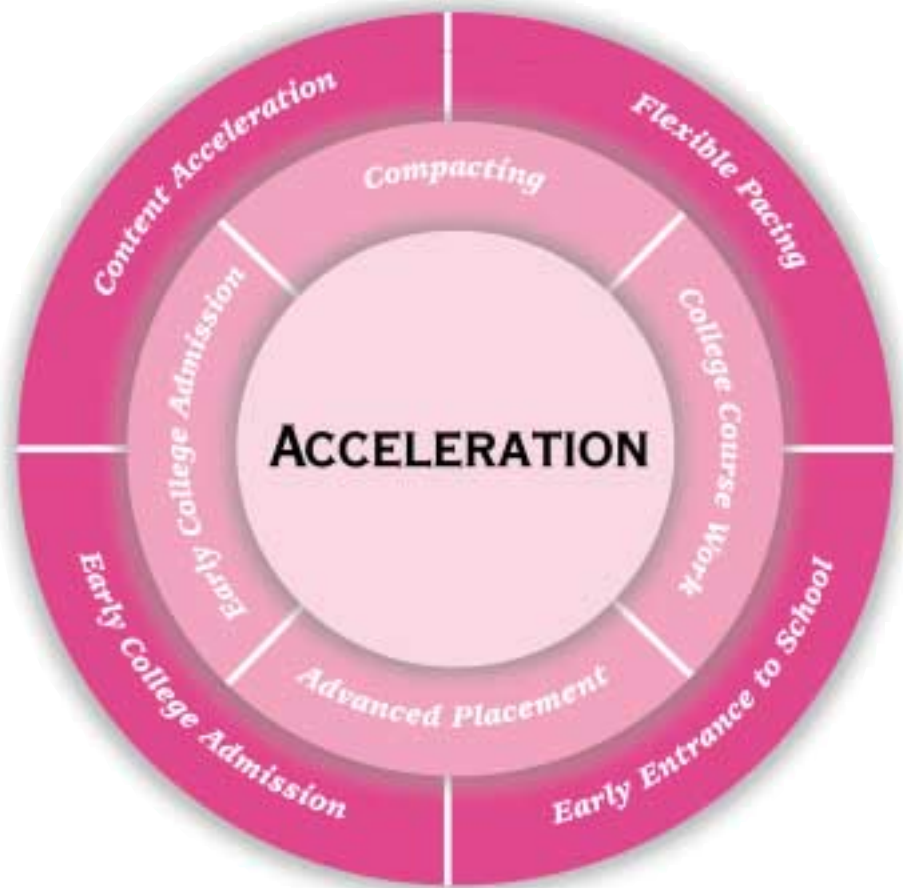
The process of identification is ongoing. Students are continuously entering and exiting school districts. Fluidity should be maintained as students' needs change each year. Identification and appropriate educational challenges should be initiated in kindergarten and reviewed annually through grade 12 (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)5i). Identification practices should be in place at the time of school enrollment. When a separate or pullout program is maintained, the selection of nominees should be determined by a committee of at least three to five individuals to maintain a fair and democratic process.

The identification process should reasonably identify three percent to five percent of the school population through multiple criteria:

- aptitude discovered through testing, special projects, teacher observation, student interest and motivation, and state or national standardized assessments
- teacher recommendation
- self, peer, and/or parent nomination

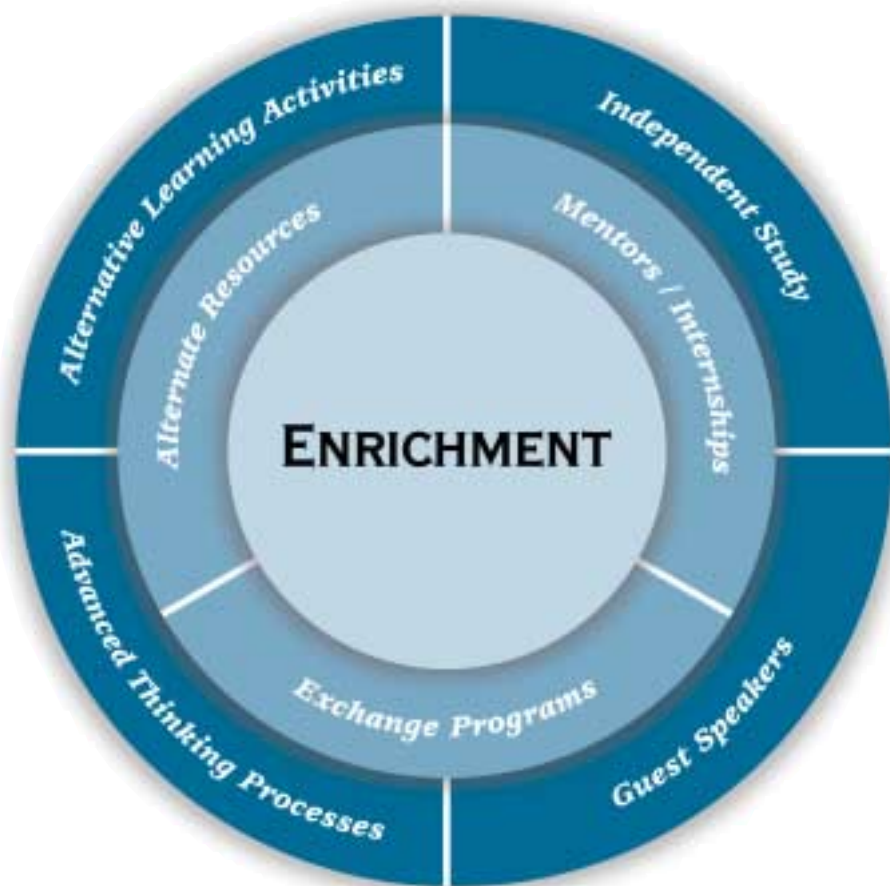


- **Flexible pacing:** Assignment to classes should be based on the ability to be challenged and handle the work, not based on age.
- **Content acceleration:** Superior performance in some areas may be addressed with placement in a higher grade level for the areas warranting it.
- **Early entrance to school:** Eligibility should be evaluated in terms of the following: (1) degree of advancement in relation to peers; (2) number of areas of advanced achievement; (3) the student's self-concept. (The percentage of students attending one to three years of preschool has increased dramatically and should be considered.)
- **Multiage classes:** Classes in which two or more grade levels are combined. Students can accelerate through self-pacing.
- **Compacting (also known as telescoping):** Refers to a form of acceleration in which part of the curriculum is covered in a shorter period of time than is usual. Previously mastered content is determined through pre-evaluation and eliminated.
- **College course work:** Qualified students take college courses for college credit while completing high school requirements (concurrent enrollment). College courses may be taken in the summer.
- **Early college admission:** Once the standards for high school are met, early admission to college is an option. Students may leave high school early and enter college.
- **Advanced placement:** The advanced placement program (APP), administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, enables high school students to obtain both high school and college credit for demanding course work offered as part of the school curriculum.



Acceleration

Acceleration involves grade-skipping or changing the rate of presentation of the general curriculum to enable the student to complete the program in less time than usually required. Prescribed seat-time is not necessary for achievement of the standards. Acceleration can occur in any subject area. Middle school students should be able to take high school courses or high school students take college courses with appropriate credit accrued. Some provision must be made for continued acceleration or high-level enrichment. Unless the student has a pre-identified problem, social or emotional development should not inhibit acceleration.



Enrichment

Enrichment is another way to meet the differentiated needs of exceptionally able students. Well-articulated assignments that require higher cognitive processing, in-depth content, and alternative modes of communication can be effective and stimulating

- **Alternative learning activities/units:** Opportunities to pursue alternative activities permit students to engage in new learning and avoid the boredom of repetitive instruction or unnecessary practice in skills already mastered.
- **Independent study:** Students conduct carefully planned, self-directed research projects which are carefully monitored by the teacher. Prerequisites include instruction in field-based and library research skills, the scientific method, and other authentic types of inquiry.
- **Advanced thinking processes:** Assignments in all curriculum areas should emphasize higher-level thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis, and evaluation.
- **Guest speakers:** University faculty, parents, business and industry leaders, or other teachers can provide information on topics beyond the teacher's expertise.
- **Mentors/internships:** Both mentors and internships allow students to interact with adult experts in their fields of interest and to increase their awareness of potential careers. Mentors act as role models.
- **Alternate resources:** Alternate resources may include materials from a higher grade level or business, university, and community resources such as laboratories, libraries, and computer facilities.
- **Exchange programs:** Students attend schools in a different community or country to enrich their educational experiences.



- **Self-contained classes:** Self-contained classes enable exceptional students to be challenged in every area throughout the day and week, to be stimulated by their intellectual peers, and to have guidance from teachers with experience in a sequential, integrated curriculum for the exceptionally able.
- **Pullout programs:** Pullout programs combine regular class integration and homogeneous grouping on a part-time, regular basis. Pullout programs require careful coordination and communication between the teachers of both classes.
- **Cluster grouping in the regular classroom:** This type of grouping permits homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping according to interests and achievement.
- **Cluster scheduling:** Schedules are arranged so that exceptionally able students can take their required core courses together to enhance rapid pacing, require less drill, and allow greater depth and breadth.
- **Honors and enrichment classes:** These classes provide opportunities for practicing higher-level thinking skills, creativity, and exploration of in-depth course content.
- **Seminars:** Aimed at research, interdisciplinary studies, visual and performing arts, academic subjects, or other areas of interest, seminars provide interaction with specialists who can give guidance in specific areas.
- **Resource centers:** A district can establish a resource center available to all students but reserve it at times for exceptionally able students from a broader geographical area (e.g., interdistrict or county-wide).



Grouping

Grouping involves placing students of like ability together in homogeneous arrangements such as special classes or clustering in the same classroom. Grouping allows for more appropriate, rapid, and advanced instruction and challenges students without isolating them.

EDUCATIONAL PLAN FOR AN EXCEPTIONALLY ABLE STUDENT

STUDENT _____ H.R. _____ Date _____
Birthdate _____ Age _____ Grade _____
Address _____ Zip _____

INITIAL ASSESSMENT INFORMATION [National norms/percentiles]

Group Achievement Tests: Date _____ Individual Achievement Test: Date _____
Name: _____ Name _____

Subtest	Percentile	Subtest	Percentile
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

INDICATORS OF MASTERY OF CCCS IN _____ :
(Subject)

MONITORED BY:

Parent: _____ Teacher: _____
Counselor: _____ Administrator: _____

CONSIDERATIONS/INTERESTS: _____

SPECIAL NEEDS/ADAPTATIONS: _____

EXPECTATIONS/OBJECTIVES: _____

RECOMMENDED FUTURE PLAN: _____

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE: _____ (Parent)
Date _____



Instructional Adaptations for Students with Limited English Proficiency

Introduction

Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) come to school with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They bring differences in physical, social, and intellectual abilities. Some are refugees who have experienced traumatic hardships. Learning a language means learning to speak, listen, read, and write with clarity and understanding — all of which rely upon thinking in a new language. The students' level of literacy in their first language and their prior mastery of the subject must be considered. The task is daunting for the students. The number of LEP students is increasing, and familiarity with the strategies on the following pages will help to smooth the way for teacher and learner. When adaptations are not provided, instruction will not be effective and the student will not benefit.

The purpose of adaptations is to reduce the complexity of the language, not the depth of the subject content. By lowering the language barrier and making the lessons as comprehensible as possible, the student's ability to understand is increased. Two factors will influence the student's ability: (1) the level of familiarity the student has with the content; and (2) the degree to which the content is given meaning through visual materials, e.g., pictures, charts, and diagrams. Nonlinguistic cues enable the student to comprehend the material and the teacher's messages.

The goal is to lower the language barrier by making the classroom communication simple, clear, and meaningful to the student. Students may sound fluent in a social setting but have difficulty with "academic" language. Students will go through a stage of silence, then mimicking, before using the language spontaneously.

The following pages include specific recommendations to ease the task of teaching content and skills to LEP students and to facilitate student learning.



Table 7.5

ADAPTATIONS FOR LEP STUDENTS

Prepare for Student	Prepare Instruction
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn about the student's background. 2. Work with the LEP/bilingual teacher to identify key objectives, skills, and concepts before introducing a unit. 3. Plan a lesson that is culturally and linguistically appropriate. 4. Create flexible small groups based on interests, need, or ability. 5. Give clear simple directions. 6. Students retell in their own words before attempting the task. 7. The teacher leads the lesson; the bilingual teacher then provides background, examples, or other support to the lesson. 8. The bilingual teacher reiterates key concepts in simple English or in the student's first language. 9. Reorganize/reinforce information. 10. Provide bilingual resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminate peripheral information. 2. Be clear and concise. 3. Translate the abstract to the concrete. 4. Consult the LEP/bilingual teacher for guidance. 5. Build background information with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brainstorming • semantic webbing • maps, graphics, photographs, illustrations • videos, film 6. Use KWL chart: Students consider what they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know • Want to learn • Learned 7. Slowly expand the amount of material to be learned.

Teaching Strategies

1. Simplify vocabulary/sentence structure.
2. Provide concrete examples with hands-on activities.
3. Elaborate understanding using "thinking aloud" and demonstrations.
4. Emphasize key words and phrases; use intonation and repetition.
5. Build associations and connections between the new and the known.
6. Use variety when presenting materials: oral, visual, graphic, etc.
7. Elaborate on figurative language and idiomatic expressions.
8. Summarize on the chalkboard or with transparencies as you speak and model.

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Table 7.5 (continued)

ADAPTATIONS FOR LEP STUDENTS

Enhance Vocabulary		Presentation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Start a picture dictionary or file.2. Teach vocabulary appropriate to a given subject before content.3. Report, reinforce, and review vocabulary during content activities.4. Label objects in the room.5. Tape vocabulary words in context for sound recognition.6. Use real objects with words where possible.7. Encourage dictionary use for word meaning.		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Maintain consistent classroom procedures/ routines for prediction and comfort level.2. Use verbal and nonverbal communication to communicate expectations.3. Routine expectations such as checking homework or going to the office for a late slip should be shared upon arrival.4. Assign buddies/peer tutors to assist with acclimation to the school and to school routines.	
Hands-On Activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ graphic organizers▶ posters▶ games▶ puzzles▶ labeling simulations▶ student-made flash cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ vocabulary▶ word banks▶ charts▶ graphs▶ surveys▶ interviews▶ drawing/illustrating▶ student-made books▶ language experience books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ response journals▶ tape recordings▶ role playing and drama	
<i>Continued on next page</i>			

Continued on next page

Table 7.5 (continued)**ADAPTATIONS FOR LEP STUDENTS**

Check for Student Understanding	Questioning Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check student understanding periodically. 2. Promote participation. 3. Check understanding of assignments, directions, instruction. 4. Use visual reviews with lists and charts. 5. Break tasks into sequential parts. 6. Help students learn to “think aloud.” 7. Allow for translation time; questions need “wait time.” 8. Rephrase for understanding. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questions structured to student language level; begin with yes/no questions and progress to advanced open-ended questions. 2. Ask a new student to point to a picture or a word to demonstrate knowledge. 3. Using visual cues, ask simple yes/no questions; e.g., “Is this a pencil?” 4. Ask either/or questions in which the answer is embedded: e.g., “Is this a pencil or a crayon?” 5. Break complex questions into several steps: e.g., “Look at the picture. Point to the boy. Is he jumping?” 6. Avoid the negative when questioning. 7. Ask simple “how” and “why” questions that can be answered with a short phrase or sentence. 8. Do not require that students speak in full sentences until that level of proficiency is reached. 9. Tell the student in advance which question she or he will be responding to, thus allowing for response practice.